

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday, 16 January 2018 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor K Mills

Councillors: M I Cosin  
P M Beresford  
T A Bond  
R J Frost  
B J Glayzer  
P J Hawkins (as substitute for Councillor D A Sargent)  
S C Manion  
M J Ovenden (as substitute for Councillor M Rose)  
P M Wallace (as substitute for Councillor J M Heron)

Also Present: Councillor N A G Richards  
Inspector S Norris (Kent Police)  
Mr D Aldiss (Deal Marines Angling Club)

Officers: Chief Executive  
Director of Environment and Corporate Assets  
Director of Governance  
Head of Inward Investment  
Democratic Services Manager

109 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J M Heron, M Rose and D A Sargent.

110 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillors P J Hawkins, M J Ovenden and P M Wallace had been appointed as substitute members for Councillors D A Sargent, M Rose and J M Heron respectively.

111 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T A Bond declared a Voluntary Announcement of Other Interest (VAOI) in Minute No. 120 (Dover Town Centre) by reason of his being a director of Dover Town Team.

112 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2017, 14 November 2017 and 12 December 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

113 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Democratic Services Manager advised that no members of the public had registered to speak on items on the agenda to which the public speaking protocol applied.

114 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE

Members received the decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet decisions relating to recommendations from the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee be noted.

115 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

There were no items for consideration.

116 ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY OR PLACED ON THE AGENDA BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE, ANY INDIVIDUAL NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OR PUBLIC PETITION

There were no items for consideration.

117 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions to the Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions be noted.

118 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Scrutiny Work Programme to the Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

119 LORRY PARKING IN THE DOVER DISTRICT

The committee welcomed Inspector S Norris of Kent Police who was present to respond to questions concerning illegal and anti-social lorry parking in the Dover district.

Inspector S Norris advised that there had been 2 cases of anti-social behaviour relating to lorries reported to Kent Police or Dover District Council between 10 July 2017 and 10 January 2018. The reported cases related to the noise from

refrigerated lorries and there had been no fatalities relating from stationary lorries in the Dover district.

The Kent Police traffic unit had been trained to issue fixed penalty notices although there were no plans to do this for local officers. Kent Police had assisted Ashford Borough Council in the lorry clamping trial that had been undertaken and while the trial worked to clear the strategic road network it had displaced lorry parking to other areas. In addition, the cost of clamping the vehicles was greater than the fine incurred.

In response to a question about the use of number plate recognition cameras being installed at the Port of Dover, members were advised that UK number plate recognition cameras had no records of foreign vehicle registrations.

RESOLVED: That Inspector Norris be thanked for attending the meeting.

## 120 DOVER TOWN CENTRE

The Head of Inward Investment presented the report on Dover Town Centre which was intended to inform Members of progress on the St James town centre regeneration scheme and outlined a number of issues and actions for partnership working which needed to be taken forward to support a comprehensive approach to capture the benefits and opportunities that St James would bring to Dover.

In respect of the St James development, it is expected that a "soft opening" would occur in early February, with the Cinema, Hotel and Nando's restaurant opening in the first tranche. The remaining units would follow-on as fit-outs were completed.

Members were advised that for wider town centre regeneration in Dover the two key issues which were to increase the footfall in the town centre and also increase local spending power. As part of this there needed to be a clear understanding of the area considered to form the town centre. A retail assessment had been commissioned as part of the Local Plan review that would look at the extent of the existing town centre boundaries and once this had been completed it would assist in informing the future retail needs across the district.

The need to build stronger links to and from the town centre to St James with appropriate signage as well as the adoption of new branding and marketing for the town centre was recognised. In respect of the issue of vacant shops, there existed an opportunity for niche, independent retailers and housing provision but this required stronger engagement from owners, landlords and interested parties.

The Council would also seek to provide more information on what could be done to help businesses in respect of business rates and a business rate breakfast forum was being organised for early 2018.

The Council was currently reviewing future budget and capital programme requirements and the following proposals would be included in the 2018/19 Medium Term Financial Plan:

- Dover regeneration enabling costs - £80,000;
- Dover Town Centre Improvement Works - £300,000; and
- Market Square public realm enhancements - £100,000

The following points were raised by Members:

- The need to support small independent businesses;
- The potential relocation of 'big' shops to St James;
- To welcome the allocation of funding identified in the report;
- The importance of partners working together and being accountable;
- The issue of town centre rents and business rates; and
- The need to engage with the local community

It was proposed that it be recommended to Cabinet:

- (a) That a further report be produced identifying achievable goals with timescales for the matters for which Dover District Council was the accountable body.
- (b) That regular updates be provided on the following:
  - Dover regeneration enabling costs (£80,000);
  - Dover Town Centre Improvement Works (£300,000); and
  - Market Square public realm enhancements (£100,000)
- (c) That the roles of partners be defined, including who is the lead organisation, and what is expected from each partner be clearly set out.

On being put to the vote these were carried.

It was proposed by Councillor B J Glayzer and duly seconded that it be recommended to Cabinet:

- (d) That a combined business and public focus group be created on the future development of Dover Town Centre.

On their being an equality of votes, the Chairman used his second casting vote in favour of the recommendation, whereupon it was carried and it was

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet:

- (a) That a further report be produced identifying achievable goals with timescales for the matters for which Dover District Council was the accountable body.
- (b) That regular updates be provided on the following:
  - Dover regeneration enabling costs (£80,000);
  - Dover Town Centre Improvement Works (£300,00);  
and
  - Market Square public realm enhancements (£100,000)
- (c) That the roles of partners be defined, including who is the lead organisation, and what is expected from each partner be clearly set out.

- (d) That a combined business and public focus group be created on the future development of Dover Town Centre.

## 121 CUSTOMER SERVICES - UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Members were advised that a number of issues had contributed to the failure to achieve targets for customer services performance indicators. These included:

- That the migration of simpler tasks to on-line self-service had seen an increase in the average length of time for calls as more difficult issues were left to deal with by telephone;
- The time taken to train new staff;
- An impact on average wait time caused by issues arising from the switch to the Avaya telephone system in the summer that have since been resolved;
- An increase in calls related to electoral services and the release of staff on election day;
- An increase in the number of calls received as a result of changes to benefits and housing needs; and
- A tougher performance indicator for 2017/18 compared to previous years.

However, following the realignment of staff following the closure of face-to-face services at the area offices there had been an improvement in respect of the performance indicators for customer services and this would be seen in the figures in Quarter 4.

There was praise expressed by Members for the quality of customer service being offered by East Kent Services' staff but also concern expressed that the withdrawal of face-to-face services at the area offices could increase the volume of telephone calls received.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

## 122 REVIEW OF ON AND OFF STREET PARKING CHARGES

The Director of Environment and Corporate Assets presented the report on the Review of On and Off Street Parking Charges.

Members were advised that in reviewing the current parking charges, both current usage levels and the charging policies in adjacent authorities had been reviewed to ensure that the Council's charges were set at a level which would not disadvantage the town centres in comparison with neighbouring towns.

The report proposed no increase to the current charges or charging periods except in the following cases:

- Dover – to extend Sunday charging on and off-street to include those car parks close to St. James's; Bench Street, Woolcomber Street, Stembrook, Townwall Street together with the on-street parking bays in Castle Street and Russell Street.
- Deal – to extend Sunday charging on and off-street to include the car parks at Middle Street, South Street, Stanhope Road, Town Hall, Sainsbury's, St.

Ethelburga's and Park Street together with the on-street parking bays in Beach Street, Prince of Wales Terrace, King Street and Victoria Road.

- Sandwich – to extend Sunday charging on and off-street to include the Guildhall car park, together with the on-street parking bays in New Street and Market Street.

Members were advised that the Cabinet had deferred the introduction of parking charges (as set out in Appendix 1 of the report) at the car parks within Reach Road, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, High Street, Eastry, High Street, Ash, and High Street, Wingham for further consultation.

The Chairman, with the agreement of the members of the committee, invited Mr D Aldiss of the Deal Marines Angling Club to speak in respect of Sunday car parking charges. Mr Aldiss advised that the club ran a number of charity angling events from Deal Pier over the course of the year that needed six hours parking for participants and he expressed concern that the cost of parking could deter entrants when added to the costs of pier charges and costs related to the event.

The following points were raised by Members:

- The impact of ending the option of sharing a single resident parking permit between two vehicles and the introduction of a limit of a maximum of two permits per household;
- The introduction of restrictions on the size of vehicle for which a resident parking permit would be issued (this would not affect most work vehicles);
- The impact of Sunday parking charges on the local community and local businesses; and
- The need to identify the level of vehicle 'churn' in car parks, particularly in Deal.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet in respect of decision CAB127:

- (a) That as the justification used by Cabinet to defer the decision on rural parking charges applied equally to the towns it not proceed with implementing the charges for the towns without further work and consultation.
- (b) That a further report be produced providing details of the level of 'churn' at car parks.

## 123 DEAL PIER UPDATE

The Director of Governance provided an update on Deal Pier.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.34 pm.